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Letter dated 12 June 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government and further to my letter dated 28 May 2002 (A/56/966-S/2002/587), I have the honour to draw your attention to a further illegal action taken by the Republic of Turkey against the Republic of Cyprus.

I refer in particular to information regarding the increase in the number of Turkish troops in the occupied area of the Republic of Cyprus, which has already been characterized as "one of the most densely militarized areas in the world" by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in his report to the Security Council of 10 December 1995 (S/1995/1020). Between 24 May and 9 June 2002, approximately 5,500 troops of the Turkish Armed Forces arrived and were deployed in the occupied area, a considerable reinforcement of the occupation force that raises the number of its troops to over 40,000.

That action flagrantly violates resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council and other international organizations, such as the Non-Aligned Movement and the Commonwealth, which call, inter alia, for the withdrawal of the occupation troops from Cyprus.

The increase in Turkish troops follows other recent provocations by Turkey, such as the illegal entry into and conduct of research in the territorial waters and the continental shelf of Cyprus by the Turkish oceanographic vessel *Piri Reis* and the announcement by the subordinate local administration of the occupying power of the extension of its so-called "territorial waters" to 12 miles.

It is obvious that those actions constitute a deliberate attempt on the part of Ankara to create and maintain, at the local and regional levels, an atmosphere of tension, fear and intimidation. That situation victimizes both communities, including the Turkish Cypriot population, which has to live with the overbearing presence of the Turkish occupation troops in an environment of repression and the stifling of free expression. In that respect, I would like to underline the statement of the Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey, Mr. Mesut Yilmaz, published in the Turkish daily *Hurriyet* on 11 May 2001, that, "after 10 years the number of Turkish troops we deploy in Cyprus will be greater than the number of Turkish Cypriots living there".

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The international community expects the Government of Turkey to terminate its illegal occupation and behave in a completely different and certainly more responsible manner, especially during the present critical period, when direct talks are being held between President Clerides and the Turkish-Cypriot leader, Mr. R. Denktash, in an effort to achieve a just and viable solution of the Cyprus problem on the basis of Security Council resolutions. An important component of the solution will be the demilitarization of Cyprus, as proposed by President Clerides. Provocations, as we have witnessed recently, demonstrate a lack of political will and raise serious questions about the desire of the Turkish side to engage in those talks with good faith.

On behalf of the Government of Cyprus, I wish to register our strong protest and to urge you and the members of the Security Council to undertake the necessary démarches towards the Government of Turkey so that it will immediately reverse this new fait accompli and put an end to its aggressive policy, which is contrary to the spirit and letter of the United Nations Charter. My Government will closely follow the developments on this issue, as well as the results of those démarches.

I should be grateful if the present letter were circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 62, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Sotos **Zackheos**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative